

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

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UNCLAS PARIS 22705

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, FR, GP, MB

SUBJ: CIVAIR: SUSPENSION PANAM SERVICE TO FRENCH
WEST INDIES

REF: PARIS 9626

1. EYROLLES, PRESIDENT OF TOURING CLUB DE FRANCE, WHO IS ALSO DIRECTOR OF FRENCH HOTEL CHAIN HAVING INTERESTS IN GUADELOUPE, ACCOMPANIED BY COL. TUDER, PARIS LAWYER WHO REPRESENTS POINT-A-PITRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, MET WITH RCAA EARLIER THIS WEEK ON PROBLEM OF SUSPENSION PANAM SERVICE TO FRENCH WEST INDIES AND CAB REJECTION OF AMERICAN AIRLINES (AA) APPLICATION OPERATE ROUTE IN PLACE OF PANAM. THEY HAD DISCUSSED QUESTION EARLIER WITH ABRAHAM, DIRECTOR OF AIR TRANSPORT AT SGAC, AND THEY INFORMED US SECSTATE OF TRANSPORTATION CAVAILLE PROPOSED RAISE QUESTION WHEN ON OFFICIAL VISIT TO WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK. (ABRAHAM HAS SINCE CONFIRMED TO US IT IS "NOT UNLIKELY" CAVAILLE WILL RAISE THE SUBJECT.)

2. EYROLLES AND TUDER REFERRED TO CURRENT AND PLANNED EXPANSION OF HOTEL FACILITIES ESPECIALLY ON GUADELOUPE AND STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM TO ISLANDS' SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL WELLBEING. TOURISM--AND HOTELS' OCCUPANCY RATE--WERE IMPERILED BY SUSPENSION DIRECT
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AIR SERVICE FROM US NORTHEAST. THEY HOPED EMBASSY

COULD LEND SUPPORT FOR RESTORATION OF AIR LINKS BY
US CARRIERS. IN REPLY WE QUESTIONED WHETHER DROP IN
NUMBER OF US TOURISTS WAS DUE SO MUCH TO ABSENCE
DIRECT AIR SERVICE AS IT WAS TO DEPRESSED STATE OF
TRAVEL MARKET IN GENERAL. PANAM HAD CHOSEN SUSPEND
SERVICE BECAUSE TRAFFIC WAS LIGHT AND WE ASSUMED THAT
FOR SAME REASON CAB HAD REFUSED LET AA TAKE OVER THE
ROUTE. WE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER AA WAS ABLE OR WAS
DISPOSED TO APPEAL CAB'S DECISION AND WE SUGGESTED
THAT THEY EXPLORE QUESTION FURTHER WITH AA. WE ALSO
SUGGESTED THEY MIGHT CONSIDER STEPPING UP PROMOTIONAL
CAMPAIGNS IN US MARKET ADVERTISING FRENCH WEST INDIES
RESORTS, PERHAPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH US CARRIERS, ON
THE OFF CHANCE THAT THIS MIGHT PRODUCE RESULTS AFFECTING
TRAFFIC PROJECTIONS ON WHICH CARRIERS AND CAB WOULD
JUDGE REVENUE POTENTIAL OF THE AIR ROUTE AND WHETHER
RENEWED SERVICE WOULD BE FINANCIALLY SOUND. WE
ADDED THAT WHILE WE WOULD REPORT THEIR VIEWS AND ALSO
SIGNAL TO WASHINGTON CAVAILLE'S INTEREST IN THIS
QUESTION, FINAL DECISION RESTED, OF COURSE, FIRST
WITH CARRIERS AND THEN WITH CAB.

RUSH

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